What is claimed is:

- 1. A method for configuring a telemetry unit to enable communication between an external device and an implantable medical device comprising the steps of:
- (a) identifying at least one appropriate telemetry protocol for use with the implantable medical device;
- (b) loading from memory a protocol driver associated with one of the identified telemetry protocols;
- (c) installing the protocol driver within the telemetry unit; and
- (d) initiating telemetric communication between the telemetry unit and the implantable medical device in accordance with the identified telemetry protocol.
- 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of installing the protocol driver includes the steps of: (i) identifying from the telemetry module already installed protocol drivers; and (ii) comparing the protocol driver with the already installed protocol drivers to determine whether the protocol driver has already been installed.
- 3. The method of claim 2, wherein the step of installing the protocol driver further includes the step of: (iii) determining whether the telemetry module can install another protocol driver.
- 4. The method of claim 3, wherein the step of installing the protocol driver further includes the step of: (iv) if the telemetry module can install another protocol driver, installing the protocol driver; and (v) if the telemetry module cannot install another protocol driver, uninstalling an already installed protocol driver and then installing the protocol driver.
- 5. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the steps recited in claim 1.
- 6. A system for communicating with an implantable medical device comprising in combination:
- (a) a telemetry unit for providing telemetric communication with an implanted device; and

- (b) a host device in communication with the telemetry unit having stored therein an application for use with the implanted medical device and a base module platform software for configuring the telemetry unit with a protocol driver to operate with an appropriate telemetry protocol.
- 7. The system of claim 6, wherein the host device is a physician programmer.
- 8. The system of claim 6, wherein the host device is a patient programmer.
- 9. The system of claim 6, wherein the host device is a general-purpose computing device.
- 10. The system of claim 9, wherein the general-purpose computing device is selected from the group consisting of a personal computer, a laptop computer, and a hand-held device.
- 11. A configurable telemetry unit for communicating with an implantable medical device comprising in combination:
- (a) a host interface for receiving a protocol driver to enable communication with the implantable medical device in accordance with a telemetry protocol recognized by the implantable medical device;
- (b) an operating system for performing secondary operations for installing a protocol driver;
- (c) an antenna for transferring signals to and from the implantable medical device via telemetry; and
- (d) a protocol driver interface for receiving a signal from the protocol driver, generating a transmit signal having parameters specified by the protocol driver, and providing the transmit signal to the antenna.